

PRESS RELEASE

June 28, 2006

RE: UNITED STATES of AMERICA v. JAIME VILLATORO

United States Attorney Terrance P. Flynn announced today that Jaime Villatoro, 25, of St. Catharines, Ontario, was sentenced by Chief U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara to a 15 month prison term on his guilty plea to three federal indictments charging conspiracy to smuggle illegal aliens into the United States.

Assistant United States Attorney Gregory L. Brown said that Villatoro became involved in the alien smuggling activity in the Summer of 2002 and continued until the late Summer of 2004. By his own estimate, Villatoro smuggled over 200 illegal aliens, mostly Latin Americans, into the United States during this time period.

Villatoro was known to be associated with a smuggling ring that operated out of Canada and was primarily responsible for assisting the aliens in entering the United States by transporting them into the U.S. Villatoro's usual method of operation was to transport the aliens into U.S. across the often treacherous Niagara River aboard an inflatable, motorized raft. To avoid detection, Villatoro relied on the cover of darkness and always transported the aliens during the late night or early morning hours. Points along both the upper and lower Niagara River were frequent entry points into the United States.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security,

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Buffalo, New York, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter J. Smith.